

# The Outlook for Progressive Education

BURTON P. FOWLER

PROGRESSIVE education is passing from the stage of propaganda to that of appraisal. Is it a clearly defined movement? Does it get the results in practice that are claimed for it in theory? Is it suitable for the large heterogeneous groups of the public school? Are its principles practicable for the secondary schools that are preparing pupils for college? Does the progressive school turn out pupils who have desirable modes of behavior?

These questions present a challenge that must be faced by parents as well as educators. It is not enough to point out the inadequacy of the traditional school. That is quite generally conceded. Evidence of its failure is found in the multitude and complexity of the disturbances that vex our present adult social order. We must also demonstrate that the new school we would set up in its place gives promise of a better society.

## Spontaneous Activity

Is progressive education a clearly defined movement?

A well established body of principles has found wide acceptance in this country, in parts of Europe, and beginnings may be found in every section of the civilized world. It is an astonishing fact that this educational ferment has started working in widely scattered centers with little or no common effort. These principles may be briefly stated as follows: Regard for the worth of the whole individual child; learning through purposeful self-activity under the guidance of teachers of wisdom and insight; the development of a wide variety of forms of cooperative skill through participation in the real activities of the school community; provision for the expression of the child's originality through many forms of creative activity; the education of parents

both for their own cultural improvement and for their understanding of the child's behavior in school and at home.

While these principles have found ready acceptance, their realization in practice presents the widest variations. From the modest innovations of a forward-looking public school system to the most radically experimental progressive school, one finds little uniformity. This is highly desirable. Standardization would devitalize the whole progressive movement.

## Proof of the Pudding

Does it get the results in practice that are claimed for it in theory?

This permits of an affirmative answer from a few important sources—the results of achievement tests, the evidence of a limited number of case studies, the success of the pupils who have entered college from progressive schools, and the scientific inspection of the work of certain progressive schools by competent observers.

Obviously we have no reliable criteria on which even to begin an evaluation of results. But the data are reassuring and indicate the urgent necessity for further investigation of the tangible results of the educational product of the newer types of schools. The Progressive Education Association hopes to be able to put into the field in the near future one or more trained observers who will make a series of studies of this question.

## Large Scale Prospects

Whether progressive methods will work in the large groups of the average public school under present conditions is debatable. Un-

doubtedly some of the best work that is being done anywhere is being done under such conditions. I could name a half-dozen cities where from my own observation I could testify to this fact. In some instances only the very unusual qualities of the teacher make possible the results achieved; in others the school authorities have provided highly favorable environment—large, attractive, informal rooms, suitable equipment, and groups of from twenty-five to thirty children. The spirit of the new education, however, will transform any teacher's work under almost any conditions.

### Traditional Obstacles

COLLEGE preparation is a favorite bugaboo—one is tempted to say excuse—of teachers who say they would like to have a part in humanizing the secondary school if the college permitted. While it is true that a complete reorganization of the curriculum is impossible under present conditions, the fact remains that we have more freedom in the secondary school than we use. The introduction of unit-teaching, individualized instruction, more first-hand experiences, and a wide range of other learning activities, alone would revolutionize classroom procedure in the American high school. The prevalent resistance to change among high school teachers themselves is amusingly illustrated by the following instance.

In a large public school system a group of educators were endeavoring to secure in a new junior high school building four or five rooms with movable furniture where some experimental work might be carried on. Only one room could be found for this purpose, with the exception of the teachers' rest room, the sewing room and the library. On expressing satisfaction to the janitor that this one room would be available the educators met this reply:

"I wouldn't count too much on this room, the teachers all want rooms with the seats screwed to the floor and this room will probably go desks by February!"

Such rigidity, as a symptom of the teachers' philosophy of education, is unlikely to be relaxed by any new set of more flexible conditions that the college may grant. Continuous courses in the major fields of subject matter, correlations between courses, and a rich program of school community life are quite possible under present conditions. Yet when all such opportunities have been utilized, the fact remains that the secondary school is not a twentieth century institution, and the responsibility for this must be shared both by the high school and the col-

lege. Statistical facts have been gathered which indicate that the graduates of progressive schools do well in college. Obviously the element of error in such studies is considerable, since most of the progressive schools use conventional methods of instruction in their secondary departments.

### The Progressive Product

DOES the progressive school with its emphasis on the socialization of efficient individuals turn out pupils who have desirable modes of behavior?

This is a big question, with little or no objective data to assist in the solution. In general, one might venture the assertion that the pupils of progressive schools are socially intelligent and may be counted upon to practice desirable behavior within the school community itself. If this behavior fails in individual cases to transfer to such forms of social life outside the school as the observance of Halloween and parties, the explanation will have to be sought in the home. The best school in the world can succeed to the fullest extent, which means the formation of good character, only when the school and the home are closely cooperating agencies.

Parent education is an integral part of progressive education. It is also the most difficult and the least successful part. Of one thing, however, we may be sure, that children are more likely to use attitudes outside the school and behave outside the school as they do within the school, if the two situations are alike than if they are unlike. The old school was and still is a world of unreal experience, the new school is for the child a real world. It is still, however, the responsibility of the home to see that the child is not expected to live simultaneously on several levels as may happen so easily.

### Where Optimism Is Justified

THE outlook for progressive education is bright with promise. Scientific research is steadily wearing down the old prejudices. A new type of teacher who is a student of childhood is appearing. The progressive schools are themselves taking a frankly critical attitude toward their own procedure. Thousands of administrators and teachers are eager for help in a safe and sane adoption of the newer principles. The public most of all needs to be informed. It needs to realize that many of the hard, unpleasant facts of our age are the product of our own faulty education and can only be changed by better education.



# Teaching in the Progressive School

*A fortunate few are born teachers; but others may acquire their characteristic spirit of high adventure.*

NELL C. CURTIS

THE teacher in the progressive school is not a wholly new type of educator. Always there have been "progressive" teachers, including parents, who naturally realized that the child's alertness to do and readiness to know were essential to his growth. They—however unconsciously—sensed children's love of doing and knowing and built upon it. They were natural students of psychology, and natural teachers, aware of the relation and of the necessity of learning to vital living.

Today we are slowly working out a school whose formulated philosophy is the psychological explanation of that type of teaching for which some people have always had a special intuition. Teachers can be definitely trained to carry out this philosophy because it can be explained in psychological terms. But if the teachers in this school approximate the greatness of those natural teachers, they, too, will be the same genuine lovers of the profession of teaching, the same constant students of psychology, and they will be as aware that complete living and thinking are the most important factors in complete learning.

Many of us, as we look back, know that our fathers and mothers were our real teachers. Perhaps they were not so intent as other educators on teaching us some definite thing. Rather they seemed always to be revealing to us that there was something to know, or to enjoy.

They told us wonderful stories, and, incidentally, we became acquainted with great literature. They made possible valuable experiences in seeing and doing, and satisfied our wish to understand. By carrying us a little further than our simple questions might demand, they also constantly added to our desire to know still more. In my own family, we often sat at night around a big table trying to make drawings with my father who was more or less successful at sketching, and though none of us ever did more in actual art expression than satisfy the desire of the moment, we did—some of us, at least—become much

interested in the idea of such expression, and studied the drawings of artists with a little more thoughtful pleasure. The steel engravings and etchings in my father's art magazines—somber pages, indeed, compared to the colored illustrations of today—were the delight of my young days, and the inspiration to further delight in pictures. And the same family made very simple attempts to play together on a few instruments, through which crude attempts, some of the family, realizing what fun it would be if one could really play, insisted on having special instruction and formed a determination then and there to learn this instrument or that.

It is something of this sort of living and learning which the progressive school is trying to promote and carry on today. It attempts to open up to children their own abilities and the richness of their world by placing them in an atmosphere in which they are free to respond creatively, and which stimulates their finest and most complete response. Upon that response the school builds, for it reveals the child's needs, his tendencies and his interests. The teacher is plainly important in creating this atmosphere. She realizes the great wealth of possibilities for children; at the same time she knows that this wealth will be most fully revealed to them through giving them contacts and experiences and opportunities to do which will stimulate in them the felt need or desire to know more. It is these contacts and experiences and opportunities which are the stimulating atmosphere. She knows, too, that the full development of these children is dependent on their own attack, on their own reaching out after, and on their genuine self-expression.

It is obvious that the teacher in the progressive school is always and forever a student. Her next step is never definitely learned. She is a constant student both of and with her children. Her classroom is her psychological laboratory; and the response of these children often drives her into a study with them of subjects which she might other-



wise have ignored, or perhaps farther into a subject than she finds herself prepared. She also has a scholarly attitude toward subject matter in general; for her selections from it must be such as will meet the children's present needs and interests in a genuinely developing way.

There is no question as to the common conviction of "progressive" teachers that definite relationship between the child's own activity and the subject matter presented is the first essential to learning. The emphasis is on this connection.

### Enter the Teacher

THERE is less certainty in the minds of some as to the teacher's place in judging and suggesting children's activities. Yet all would agree that adequate, well rounded learning is not assured by the connection alone; that the type of activity in itself is also important. If that is so, then the teacher's responsibility in judging and also suggesting types of activities would seem to be a very important one.

Activities initiated by children may be too narrow in their range; they may require too little self-effort; they may fail by their very nature to arouse any intellectual interest. John would draw all day long; Bob would forever slump into a book; Roger would be well content to dig. But John is already too much of a specialist; Bob will continue always to do the easiest thing; Roger may easily remain satisfied with ditch digging, nor does he care in what soil he digs, nor very much for what purpose. Bob needs to be aroused again and again from his willingness to lead a perfectly vicarious existence in books; and surely there is some vitally interesting means through which Roger's intellectual curiosity may be stimulated.

It is without question—so it seems to many of us—the teacher's place to see that activities, contacts, experiences are brought about which naturally suggest or demand more of knowledge which naturally open up the great fields of learning, and which eventually will have introduced every type of knowledge. The teacher in this school, as in any other, must face the necessity for the acquiring of subject matter; and with more meaning. Development does not take place without it.

As a general criterion for her own selecting and judging of worth while activities, the teacher holds in mind, of course, those which have some connection with the world's social needs and interests. This gives her a general basis for her own suggestions to her group, and for judging the possibilities or non-possibilities in child initiated activity. But this is not

enough to determine what she may wisely suggest. It is important, also, that these activities shall be such as are important in a child's own world, and significant in interpreting it.

Moreover, the teacher who herself plans possibilities sees more readily when and how children's schemes will fit into the whole. The very wideness and depth of her own study make her more competent to select, to see possibilities in children's contributions. Unhampered by a course of study, and having a clear purpose of her own, she is able to make the most of children's purposes and to direct them to their consistent development.

Again, the teacher must thoughtfully select, to meet the present need, subject matter including other experiences. Other factors than mere connection with the immediate interest enter into the selection. How much easier it would be to fall back upon a logically arranged course of study in every subject! But no course of study can obviate the necessity for this teacher's own constant judgment in selection if she is alive to class and individual demands.

Yet there is a chance that, while interesting material may be presented, there may be only a superficial relationship so far as the child's comprehension and development are concerned. It may be selected and presented without due regard for order in the child's building up of knowledge so that he may truly comprehend rather than think superficially that he knows. So much of the world's present knowledge cannot possibly be understood or appreciated unless children gradually understand something of the steps by which it has evolved. There is a sense of relationship with that which has gone before which may be necessary to a satisfying understanding, and to carrying on further.

### Giving Meaning to Experience

To make my point clear, children are, perhaps, using clay or reading about pottery and pottery making. They are genuinely interested. They show by questions or other response that they are ready to know more. At this point the teacher must select from possible experiences connected with pottery making, and from the great fund of related knowledge, that which will not only relate to the immediate interest, but which will be the next step for this particular group of children in finally comprehending the whole. For younger children the first steps in comprehension are not—it seems to me—the complicated modern processes. I have seen primary groups, with little or no understanding of the properties of clay and of the simple ways of pottery

making, engaged in the most modern process of pouring pottery. Its relation to their thinking gave it some meaning. The children were interested, but there was, also, an excitement caused, I believe, by mental confusion.

The thoughtfulness of the child's further questioning and his desire to know more largely depend on the teacher's intelligent selection and presentation of further experiences and subject matter. The child appreciates progress, and even wishes—however vaguely—to be a part of it, if given some chance to realize a step by step growth. The simple experiences and activities related to his interest and somewhat consistently added, one to the other, are his means of interpreting an otherwise confusing and too exciting world in which understanding has too often been sacrificed to progress.

There is so much, in these days, which catches children's interests in an exciting but non-intelligible way; exciting because *not* intelligible. Eight-year-old John is absorbed with the things he can do with a commercial chemistry set. He has a few isolated experiences, gets hold of a few terms and perhaps a little superficial information, but these lack entirely the meaning which might make a similar experience a genuinely developing as well as a thrilling one; and

which might give him the key to unlock further this particular chemical world.

It matters little, probably, that in the child's learning period in school certain facts are either left out or are not retained. We need not be horrified, I think, at a certain lack in children's knowledge of places, persons and events which questions sometimes rather startlingly reveal. But it is essential that they shall finally come through with some understanding of relationships in order intelligently to go on, or to fill in the gaps in their own information when necessary.

The teacher in the progressive school assumes a very great responsibility—consideration of each child as a person, an individual, as well as a member of a group, of whose specific interests and needs she will become aware and attempt to satisfy; consideration of the experiences and activities which will be significant in development, and of subject matter which will be a genuine factor in each child's education.

But once in her own classroom she soon drops any burdensome sense of responsibility in the fun of genuine, creative living with children who are being given time and opportunity to do their own thinking, to form their own judgments, and to discover their own finest interests and abilities.

## The New College

ROBERT DEVORE LEIGH

ALL those whose contact with college goes beyond the observation of its life from a grandstand on Saturday afternoons, or in the reflection of colored lights from a ballroom floor, know that the more serious part of the institution for undergraduate education is going through a period of rapid transformation. Take, for example, the sweeping changes proposed, or in operation, at Harvard, Columbia and the University of Chicago.

At Harvard visitors may see in the new Harkness house units the physical aspects of a comprehensive program of education instituted under the leadership of President Lowell since the World War. It includes an expensive system of individual instruction by tutors, a scheme of final general examinations overhauling a large proportion of the undergradu-

ate's work, and a winter reading period of residence without class instruction. Together these changes constitute a bold attempt to establish in this, one of the oldest and most influential of our institutions, a new relation between the student and his work and between the student and his instructor—a relation emphasizing the student's setting out under individual guidance to master knowledge and to gain understanding in great areas of science or literature, a relation much different from the old mass prescription of specific bits of knowledge patched together year by year to form a four-year curriculum.

No less striking in its boldness or thoroughness is the new plan for undergraduate work recently announced by the energetic young President of the University of Chicago. In place of the lock step of



class work and addition of semester courses, the student is to have placed upon himself the responsibility of advancing at his own rate toward the final examinations upon which the award of the degree will be based.

Less spectacularly, at Columbia there has been going on for a period of years a reorganization of materials of instruction, a breaking down of time-honored departments of knowledge, which make the work of the first two years a new and alluring world for the oncoming student.

These new programs are not exceptions; they are outstanding examples of what is going on, in greater or less degree, in practically every first-rate liberal arts college in the land. The movement is so general as to justify the phrase, the new college, the modern college, even, in some instances, the experimental college, as contrasted with the traditional institutions many of us knew as undergraduates a generation or more ago.

Beneath the variety and complexity of these changes in courses, credits and requirements there can be discovered a few fundamental ideas which not only determine college revision but are at the root of similar changes in the schools below, especially in what have been called modern or progressive schools.

### Orientation of Knowledge

THE first has to do with altering content, the subject matter, of the liberal arts curriculum. Detailed, mechanical rearrangements of courses and requirements have been a regular indoor winter sport of college faculties for many years. But of a more hopeful sort is the present tendency to organize materials round epochs in civilization or round problems rather than formal academic departments. Under Meiklejohn, in the Experimental College at Wisconsin, the most striking change of this sort is under way. Here the cultures of the fifth century (B. C.) Athens and of modern America are taken in successive years as the subjects of study. This study of significant epochs in civilization is by no means unknown in the lower schools, especially in the progressive elementary schools. But in the college field it is a pioneer attempt to face squarely the problem of determining by trial the most valuable content of a curriculum for the American boy and girl in the year 1931. The same problem is being approached at Columbia, Chicago and elsewhere in many ways.

The traditional liberal arts studies are a survival of a thoroughgoing organization made by the medieval schoolmen for the world of their day. Their

world, however, was so different from ours that it is high time we attacked the problem again with the same thoroughness.

Behind most of the newer curricula is the idea that the analysis of an important civilization will have an interest, a reality, a sense of the significant for the student which it is not possible to evoke in the unrelated, artificially organized subjects of the departmentalized curriculum.

It should be added that in some of the newer programs such as Sara Lawrence and the proposed Bennington College a somewhat different principle is maintained. Here it is assumed that the most vital, worth while curriculum for each student must be framed with a view to her own contemporary interests and intellectual development. This does not mean a return to the elective system, but rather to an individually arranged but coherent and progressive course of study. Respect for vital, significant content is united with a sense of the importance of recognizing individual differences.

### Individualized Effort

THE second widespread change in the colleges has to do with methods of work. Here there are discernible at least two distinct tendencies. First, is the substitution of an individual program of work checked by written tests, for the group methods of lectures and recitations, with uniformity of assignment. In schools this individualism of work is known generally as the Winnetka or Dalton plan. Under it the student with written directions and materials of work proceeds at his or her own pace to work ahead toward the mastery of content. The classroom, where it survives, becomes a workshop, the teacher being present for individual consultation and help, occasionally to give general directions. Questions are asked by students who need more knowledge rather than by teachers for police purposes. As I read the new Chicago plan it seems to me a carrying up of this Winnetka system, with necessary modifications, into the college field. And in the Rollins conference plan all that is significant in differing from usual college seminar practice seems to me to be in this same direction.

Somewhat different is the so-called individual or small group instruction method called the tutorial system or, when limited to a group of high ranking students, the honors method of instruction. The latter has been developed most fully at Swarthmore, the former at Harvard. Here students are enrolled directly under one instructor for a large portion of their work for the year, and usually in the field of



the student's major interest. Although precise arrangements vary, the daily round of specific assignments and class attendance is usually replaced by longer projects of work involving continuous periods in the laboratory, library, studio or field, with informal group or individual conferences meeting once a week or less often. Here under wise guidance is an educational method under which self-dependence, initiative and independent thinking can best be promoted. Where it has not been crippled in operation by being imposed on a class attendance system or confined to a small fraction of the student body, it has been one of the most strikingly successful innovations in college education during recent years. It is likely to prove a most effective device for permeating the college gradually with the newer aims of self-dependence, initiative and interest, in place of the traditional disciplinary values associated with passive acquisition of predigested knowledge.

### Personality Problems of Youth

A THIRD major change in the college field may be classified loosely under the heading of personnel work. By this is meant the attempt by various devices and through various officials to get at the whole individual in the educational process, to discover when there is failure in the classroom, the personal causes of that failure, when there is extreme maladjustment in the world outside the classroom its sources in health or personality difficulty, and to give to the individual needing it the benefit of such expert guidance and redirection as is now available, in the light of modern medical and psychological insight and the rule-of-thumb accumulations of adult experience.

The professor isolated from students by unfortunate traditions of aloofness may limit his vision of the problems of youth to those of an intellectual nature and rate his students on a scale of desirability from the stupid at the bottom to the brilliant at the top. The occasionally successful administrator, the family physician, and others who know what is really going on in the lives of youth, however, have it borne in on them that the critical problems of late adolescence are social, emotional and moral more than intellectual, and that intelligent handling of intellectual problems involves a consideration of all the other aspects of the individual personality. Here again is one of the most hopeful fields of reorganization in the college world. When fully grasped it almost revolutionizes the sense of values in the educational process. It promises eventually to make schooling a really effective means of education, caus-

ing desired and desirable changes in human beings. The vital need of seeing "the whole child" has long been recognized; here again the college is at length profiting by the experience of younger children.

### A Standing Challenge

ANOTHER striking, recent development in the college field is that of the more exact measurement and assessment of individual ability by means of tests and record cards. New forms of examinations are replacing old forms. This is especially true with regard to the major collegiate task of selecting among the applicants for admission those best fitted to carry on college work. On the whole, however, the colleges with the aid of the new predictive devices have been slow to discard older tests for fitness. The same colleges which are experimenting with newer arrangements and relationships of content continue to require fifteen units of rigidly defined, traditional subject matter for entrance. Colleges carrying on most hopeful experiments in newer methods of work which promote initiative and self-direction continue to impose on the secondary school an entrance system which brings to the top the mentally docile, the ready memorizers and absorbers rather than the inventive and the creative.

This is the very spearhead of the modern American educational problem. The more progressive college today is attempting to take students as they come from the American school system and with its eyes fixed solely on the four-year period, to make over their attitudes and interests. Initiative, independent thinking, intellectual and artistic interests, however, are not created over night or in four years of late adolescence. They need to be fostered carefully and consistently from the earliest school years. They should come to fruition in the college period. Many of our so-called newer schools are eager to be freed from the traditional prescriptions of content and the resulting necessities of method so that they may promote directly these same worth while qualities. They wish, as a distinguished educator has recently said, "to be educational rather than preparatory institutions." With the improved devices for testing ability and rating personality it is high time that the new college opened the way for secondary schools to reorganize their work both in content and method. There would be no surer way of promoting the very ends which they are now so hopefully seeking in their current experimentation. In fact it is the only way by which the colleges themselves can attain, for a large number of their students, any striking success.



# A Cooperative Venture

*Materials, gathered by a group of teachers who have pooled their experience, offer new tools to homes as well as to schools.*

SARA LYMAN PATRICK

THE new school brings with it new needs—needs for materials, information, techniques that a traditional school did not have. The teacher is lured on to fascinating new endeavors and at the same time is continually stalled by new kinds of handicaps. Through the realization of these needs an interesting teachers' venture came into being.

The progressive school is a laboratory, a studio, a shop primarily. It uses books—yes—and far more intelligently than the traditional school. Books are used to extend, expand and enrich experience. They are not used to take the place of that experience. In their proper place, they are among the most important materials of education. The use of books from this standpoint is in itself an important topic for consideration, but in the limits of this article I shall particularly consider the use of materials by which children may get a background of first hand experience through which they gradually become oriented in a complex and baffling world.

Experiences to be real to children must be participated in—worked through. They must literally and figuratively get into things all over—head over heels. Little children have no background for assimilating something merely heard about. Even a thing seen has little meaning until they have made it their own through working it out in some form or other, usually through the use of materials.

For very little children, the more plastic the material is, the more readily manipulated by them, and the cheaper it is so that it may be used in practically unlimited quantities, the more adequate it is for their use. For example, blocks, sand and clay are excellent for their purpose. With raw materials such as these and with stimulation from the larger world around them carefully planned for by the teacher, the children build, organize and reorganize their miniature world.

It is through the common use of these materials more than in anything else that social attitudes are developed partly through the give and take of working together and partly as little by little the life of the larger world is revealed to them.

The learnings of young children are necessarily superficial in one sense but they should be real as

far as they go for they are the foundation on which later learnings are built. Gradually the interest in function and form and simple relationships gives place to more searching inquiry and becomes part of a larger plan—

A group working on Zuni life in order to understand a life lived so close to Nature (and also to see some of the simple beginnings out of which our own life has evolved) must themselves find clay, make it into bowls, paint it with colored earths, and fire it in the schoolyard. They must grind their own corn between stones and cook it; they must make and use a fire-drill; they must weave little blankets on their own looms; they must make a small Pueblo dwelling of adobe; they must make drums and rattles and costumes for their ceremonials. Making a sand table representation or even dramatizing these things are not adequate for conveying the ideas and helping them to feel them as their own.

A group working on the story of books and how they came to be must make real books, sewed and with board covers. They must make paper out of rags, and block prints with linoleum. They could better understand the forerunners of books if they should make clay tablets, papyrus, wax diptychs, an illuminated manuscript, using their own quill pens and making their own ink and colors. Thus the printed page takes on new meaning.

A group working on lighting would want to make candles, lanterns, lamps, to install some electric lights and to find out how they work and why.

## Adventures in Reality

WORK with materials takes time but it is real. There is no short cut to real experiencing. There is just sham or pseudo-experience as an alternative. Work of the kind I have suggested does not take time away from other school work for it is through such work that the rest gains meaning and is seen in proper perspective. It is a necessary part of the whole. Teachers are recognizing these things more and more but it is one thing to recognize something intellectually and quite another to put it into practice. This, is especially hard, because there are new tech-



niques to be evolved, new values to stress, and always new subject matter to be assimilated. It means hours and hours of a teacher's time outside of school. Much time will have to be given to preparation but it is a waste for a teacher of this type to have an unnecessarily difficult task. A worn out teacher cannot be an artist in her school. A teacher needs time for those things that enrich her own life and refresh her spirit.

Then, too, many teachers are stumbling along eagerly desiring to do a fine piece of teaching but needing stimulation and many concrete suggestions for there was very little help of this kind in their preparation for teaching. Let us consider also the waste in needless duplication of effort when teachers in various parts of the country go through all the same steps of trial and error.

We must realize too that classroom needs are often urgent. One cannot always spare the time it takes to locate a needed article. Let us suppose it is a cotton boll or silkworm eggs or bayberry wax or bamboo for making pipes of Pan. If they cannot be supplied on short order the need for them will pass.

### Each for All and All for Each

ALL these needs and more led a small group of us, teachers and experienced students of education, to form an association for the solution of such problems. We called it the Industrial Arts Cooperative Service.<sup>1</sup> One of the members of this group volunteered to act as secretary for a limited time and donated her services. This made it possible to start at once on March 19, 1924. In July of the same year we were incorporated according to the New York State laws under the Department of Education as a consumers' cooperative association and member of the Cooperative League of America. We had no capital except our nominal membership dues. With this we purchased a few needed commodities which we housed in a desk in my classroom. We were possibly just a little ahead of the time. At any rate, we were inexperienced both in business methods and in knowledge of how to get our ideas across. We struggled along for three years making little headway. During this time we kept alive because of our great faith in the ultimate value of the organization we had started. This conviction was so strong that it gave us courage to go on.

In 1926, we rented a room in an apartment for an office. In the following year, we took what was for us a great plunge. We rented a seven-room apartment, renting rooms to pay for our office rental and we engaged the services of a full time secretary.

From that time on we have steadily grown.<sup>1</sup> Last year we added another worker to take charge of finance and publicity and since then we have added two others to our staff. This staff executes the plans of members of the Council, some of whom are very active in planning new services, trying out or investigating new supplies, reviewing books and writing direction sheets.

### A Number of Things

OUR parcels go to all parts of the world, although of course most of our members are in the United States.

The Service studies in mimeograph form give directions, recipes, suggestions for carrying on activities, source material on different subjects, bibliographies and the like.

Our loan library of pictures sends out strong fibre cases containing twenty pictures on a particular subject. These are the finest pictures procurable—in color when at all possible. For example, we have a loan collection on Egypt to be used in connection with a study of ancient Egyptian life. All kinds of raw materials so much needed today and so difficult to find have been assembled here for distribution.

We have manufactured a few needed supplies and will add to our list as time goes on.

Books can be purchased from our carefully selected list.

Carpenter's tools, artist's and craftsman's material of various kinds are to be found.

A monthly news sheet tells the members of interesting occurrences in education, gives a suggestion on how to do some particular thing, and informs the members of new materials now available through the Service. Frequent meetings for local members are held with interesting programs giving concrete information pertinent to teaching.

Although the elementary teaching field is the one best developed, we are already reaching out in many directions. Secondary schools, teachers' colleges, camp and club leaders, and parents are finding that we can meet some of their needs with the materials and services we have assembled.

This is a professional association existing for the sole purpose of improving and facilitating the practice of education in its larger aspects. It is and always will be non-profit making. This does not mean that we undersell others, but that accruing surplus will always be expended in extending some much

<sup>1</sup>The Industrial Arts Cooperative Service is located at 519 W. 121st St., N. Y. C.



needed educational service. The needs are always far greater than our financial status will permit us to handle.

In an age when, by the very nature of our complex industrial society, the interdependence of people is being demonstrated, is it not fitting that teachers and all others vitally interested in education should feel in some tangible way their interdependence? We

stress social attitudes in school as of paramount importance and rightly so. Must not teachers themselves live according to this spirit in their attitudes to one another? The practice of school competing with school, or teacher competing with teacher is to my mind a very primitive one which should now be obsolete. Instead are we not ready for a generous sharing of all that will better our common work?

## Parents in Partnership

*Where parents are an integral part of the school, working together becomes a matter of course.*

ELEANOR W. FOSTER

LIKE many schools founded or re-organized in recent years, Windward School is a corporation of parents and teachers. In this school, however, the organization has taken the form usually assumed by a club, that of a membership corporation, and like a club the members are bound together by a common interest and are expected to make specific personal contributions to the group on the basis of their several differences in aptitude, training and interest.

The membership of the organization, like that of a club, is self-perpetuating. When parents make application to the school for the admission of a child, one of the parents, usually the mother, is requested to spend one entire day visiting the school so that she may have an opportunity to form an impression of school procedure and to determine whether or not she is in sympathy with the educational aims of the school. On this or some other occasion, the chairman of the enrollment committee meets her and discusses with her the organization of the school and the responsibility for cooperation assumed by parents and staff. One of the educational directors meets and talks with the child, forming an estimate of his capacity to enrich and to adapt to the life of the group for which he is proposed. Although they are ex-officio members of the enrollment committee, the main responsibility of the directors centers in this decision in regard to the child. From that point, the enrollment committee undertakes the consideration of the application, weighing the capacity and willingness of the new family to cooperate with the

staff in the joint undertaking of providing the best educational facilities which they can jointly create.

It sounds like a complicated set of hurdles to be jumped and the question almost inevitably arises as to the meaning of the procedure, whether it is an integral part of a well considered policy, or whether it is a lot of red tape. The answer lies in the extent to which the expected parent participation is actually realized. Aside from attendance at school meetings and at the quarterly teacher-parent conferences which take the place of report cards, our records show some actual contribution to school activities involving time and effort on the part of 85 per cent of the parents enrolled last year.

Now this figure might be achieved, for the time being, by the pro rata division of mechanical and routine tasks, but it is only in allowing for the expression of individual interests and preferences by a choice of activity that the organization can continue to hold the enthusiasm of its workers. Every spring the school sends to every family a printed list of possible forms of participation, asking the parents to express preference for those activities which most appeal to them, or for which they consider themselves best adapted. This list contains twenty-two items, and those which the parents check indicate readiness to be called upon for these forms of participation.

There is a surprising diversity in this list. Committees have not been manufactured in order to supply parents with "busy work," but an attempt has been made to avoid unnecessary duplication in the



personnel of the committees. The finance committee has done its work so well under the chairmanship of two successive treasurers that the unendowed school has run on a moderate tuition without deficit for the first four years of its life. The house committee has charge of building and grounds. A luncheon committee confers with the mother who undertakes to provide the midday meal. The library committee installed a duo-decimal system of cataloging the reading material, and has trained both teachers and pupils in the use of the system. The daily attendance of some member of the committee keeps the library in order and the reference material available. The work of the enrollment committee has already been noted. The committee on parent discussion has in charge the arrangements for school meetings except those business meetings of the corporation called by the Board of Trustees. Their programs have called out a gratifying number of members, often as high as a 75 per cent attendance, conspicuous among school meetings for the interest betrayed by fathers as well as mothers. The health committee weighs and measures all the children quarterly, and makes interesting analytical charts of attendance both for the school as a whole and in groups. These charts are discussed with the school physician at staff meetings. Special committees have disbanded when the occasion for their services has passed. The building fund committee, as an especially shining example, ceased to exist after their efforts of last spring had realized \$60,000 for a new building in a three-week period.

### The Versatile Parent

MANY parents make a contribution to the school outside of the work of the committees. Excursions are a vital and continual element in the experience of the children and aside from those parents who occasionally drive a careful of youngsters on an excursion, four have volunteered to do it regularly one afternoon a week. One mother who repeatedly went the rounds of the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian rooms last spring developed an unsuspected capacity for story telling. "The Egyptians" referred enthusiastically to her "continued-in-our-next" tale in a setting three thousand years old.

The special contributions of individuals make one of the most interesting parts of the picture. One mother with musical training gives a morning a week to work with the preacademic groups for which we can find no space on the special music teacher's crowded schedule. Another plays the accompani-

ment for the country dancing class. Another with considerable teaching experience volunteers two afternoons a week for the direction of dramatics. A mother, who is a psychologist with a master's degree from Columbia, does all of the testing, both individual and group. She is in school from nine to twelve daily. Four mothers work until noon every day as assistant teachers. They voluntarily attend a training course, and enter into their duties with the full understanding that they may be asked to elect another form of service. The enthusiasm and training of one mother was mainly responsible for giving form, during the first two years, to our system of individual and group records, and another carries the burden of weekly transcription from the teachers' notebooks on to the permanent record forms. The offer on the part of a mother to assist in the office one morning a week was revised after the first session to two mornings. She "likes to be around."

### Father Takes a Hand

How about fathers? Nine to twelve is out of the question but their activities are not limited to a few hours of committee work, either. The plans for our new building were made and its erection superintended by two architect fathers as a parent contribution. Others offered valuable suggestions and made us real savings from their experience and connections as builders. From time to time individuals have talked to the older children on banking, city planning, coal, the stock exchange, the production of a great newspaper, techniques of wrestling, life in far places. This list is no more varied than the children's interests; ask any father. One of the architects, asked to address a group, refused. He was sorry, but he simply could *not* make a speech. Later in the morning, he was discovered by one of the directors in an animated discussion of architecture with the oldest group. He looked surprised as he realized his position, and explained: "I'm not making a speech. This bunch just began to fire questions at me." An artist father takes a group of twelve children selected from several groups for a complete afternoon session one day every week, and paints with them.

At the quarterly conferences on the progress of every child, both parents meet the group teacher, and out of their discussion there emerge joint recommendations for the action of both home and school. Parents and staff alike regard this aspect of the co-operative program as the most significant and important of all, for here two elements in the child's environment reach some measure of unification of aims



and emphases. Because of the unusually frequent contacts between parents and school already described, because our parents are "on the inside" and really know us, this working together to meet the child's needs is possible to a degree that many educators find incredible.

And that brings up the question which is always asked sooner or later. It is addressed to the directors and it runs something like this: "What do you do with the parents who want to run the school?" There are two answers to that question and the first is the less important. It is to be found in the By-Laws and it reads: "The educational directors, subject to the direction and control of the Board of Trustees, shall direct the educational policy of the school." We have never had to dig it out of its abiding place in the By-Laws. The second answer

is more important and we use it continually—every educator works at his best when he has the confidence that his community is behind him. We have enough faith in this school which a community is building to believe, even in the trying moments of partial vision, that an ever increasing knowledge of it will mean a strengthening of confidence in its aims, its purposes and its effectiveness.

The value of parent participation has proven itself to us so thoroughly that we look to safeguard the future of the school by a policy of expansion slow enough to maintain solidarity. The school, at the time of writing, numbers ninety children from fifty-four families and the plan calls for the addition of only one new group of twelve children a year. This means that both new parents and new members of the staff can become a functioning part.

## This Is the Way They Work

*Typical pictures of school activities suggest to parents the many doors that are open for their own participation.*

ETHEL H. BLISS

EDUCATORS, who on the strength of their personal convictions, have reassured parents as to the fruits of progressive education, are beginning to find their faith justified by works. Where even four years ago most progressive school projects were described in terms of purposes and experiments, they can now be pictured in terms of their realization in the lives of children. For numbers of children have by now come out of their progressive elementary schools to meet successfully the challenge of secondary schools and colleges, with their continued emphasis on the academic traditions and especially upon entrance examinations.

A symposium published in *CHILD STUDY* for February, 1927, described a number of interesting parent-initiated school experiments. Many of these projects have lived and, flourishing, have answered in large part the questions leveled at them in the beginning.

Today it would be impossible, short of a comprehensive survey from coast to coast, to enumerate, much less to describe, the numbers of truly cooperative school and parent ventures that are so marked

a part of the school scene. A number of schools in all parts of the country have contributed to a "cross-section" by describing where their school parents have had a hand or have found special interest. Much is suggested by such a cross-section—the great variety of setting, from the small co-operative school to the town system; the rapidly growing participation of parents in more and different ways; and the shifting educational emphasis from school to school. In such a suggestive rather than inclusive panorama high lights fall in some cases on the philosophy of a whole educational system, in others on a single experiment.

But wherever one turns, one sees that adult education has come to stay and that parents are among the first to reap the benefit. Educators are realizing more and more that it is not enough for them alone to know the goal toward which they are striving; they must help the parent to share this understanding. Typical of this purpose, the North Shore School at Huntington, Long Island, which was started and is backed by parents, carries along with its school program a study group for parents. This



group has also a community interest and invites parents to join with it. Together they discuss the immediate problem of their own schools, and the wider implications of education as a whole. The Windward School of New York described more completely on page 196 is also noteworthy for the particular quality of parent-school cooperation out of which it has developed. In the Tower Hill School in Wilmington, Delaware, there is a parent in the school who has a room to which teachers, parents, as well as the boys and girls can come for a cup of tea and a bit of advice. More such bridges between home and school will help in preventing many difficulties.

Lest some parents be unduly troubled by the rather severe criticism leveled at the new school, it is only fair to say that many other parents, undaunted, are hard at work starting new ones and busy helping to develop those they have started. The Little School at Englewood, New Jersey, is one such, the Woodward School in Brooklyn another, and the Brookside School in Montclair, still another. These are only typical of what is going on all over the country. The demands for such schools are far in advance of the supply.

## The House a School Built

HOUSING and equipment have been frequent problems. Because they deliberately turned away from the institutionalized aspect as typified in conventional edifices, the experimental schools have been compelled to utilize much ingenuity. The Park School of Cleveland has thus developed an unusual setting which grows as the school grows.

In 1918 a group of parents organized a small kindergarten which grew and grew, until in 1928, the next move was from city quarters to a twelve acre property of rolling woodland. Miss Mary E. Pierce, director of the school, describes how it utilized portable housing.

When the onward march of "portables" began, individual room units were rolled into place in such a way that by their spacing, corridors and hallways were formed. After all were in place, roofs were extended and joined; wings for library, offices and faculty rooms were built. Across the horizontal part of the main building was erected a porch, thus furnishing a covered passage way between the vertical parts of the H or wings. Later, the porch was glassed in.

"By cutting new doors and windows, painting all walls a warm soft yellow on the inside and buff with green trim on the outside, we achieved the first

note of satisfying color. Some rooms have stained furniture, others are very charming with painted furniture. Each teacher developed her own color scheme, being mindful always of Cleveland's gray winter days and of the fact that some rooms get a certain amount of northern light. Gay chintzes and cretonnes have been used for pillow covers and hangings in various places. With the addition of posters, pictures, plants and the usual collection of exhibitions, children's work and the numerous things that develop when interest is a guiding force in activity, we find ourselves in an environment that is satisfying and delightful, a place where we like to be and to work."

In the Greenwich Village section of New York City on the combined roofs of a community block a quite different sort of experiment, the Roof Nursery School, was started, not by a group of educators who wanted to spread among parents the value of preschool education, but by a few professional mothers who wanted their young children in the care of trained teachers.

A group of old unsanitary and unimproved red brick houses was remodeled as modern apartments. The old backyards were connected to form one spacious garden with trees, shrubbery and a wading pool in the center. The roofs covering three of the houses were connected and fenced in to make our large, sunny playroof for the children of nursery school age. It is directed by Mrs. Rose Saletan.

The transition that the child has to make from home to school is a very gradual one. He goes from his home to a school on home ground, where the environment is very similar to that of his own home. He sees an apartment somewhat similar to the one he comes from, a kitchen with a maid, bedrooms, a home bathroom with a bathtub. The atmosphere is warmer than that of a school house—there are no older children about in the building—only seven of his peers.

Because this was a cooperative undertaking, funds were necessarily limited. Instead of a hindrance the directors feel that this turned out to be a blessing in disguise. As a result the equipment, rather than being lavish, overabundant, and stereotyped, had to be improvised by the teacher with the aid of a carpenter. It is sturdy, simple and adjustable to various uses. It lends itself to the individual needs of the children and encourages more creative and experimental play.

But even where parents are ready to accept these changes from the conventional school setting, it is still not always easy to approach the three R's with

an equally open mind. Turning both from the extreme wing which delayed reading, writing and arithmetic too long, and the other extreme of starting too soon, many of the schools have now taken a middle ground. They are helping parents to understand why this apparent delay is advantageous and also how learning to read can be accomplished in the end as if by magic. They are educating the parent who says, as happened recently at the Birch Wathen School, "I began to think my child would never learn to read. One week she couldn't read and the next she read with no apparent effort."

This parent and others have been reassured that it is possible to learn these necessary tool subjects when readiness and need for them arise.

### New Methods and Old Skills

"A FIFTH Grade Experiment in the Social Studies," as described by Miss Alice Rode-wald of the Branch Ethical Culture School, gives to the parents a very real picture of the school at work. The same approach is being more and more frequently used by junior high schools. Dr. Clark of Lincoln School describes such an experiment:

Each year comes the challenge from a new group of pupils, who eager and expectant, demand of the high school organization increased opportunities for engaging experiences—for activities of added depth and fullness of meaning.

"In an attempt to meet these demands and justify them scientifically there has been set up in the junior high school an experiment embracing the subjects of English, social studies and art. Our emphasis has been directed toward the breaking down of subject matter barriers rather than the mere correlation of the various subjects. In discovering the bonds and interrelations existing between these three subjects we propose to build up a body of materials suitable for use as units of work in the junior high school. We recognize the need for greater variety in the program of the adolescent."

At present the advantages which seem to accrue from the new procedure are fourfold: the child's attention is focused upon a centralized core of interest; he is given a much richer content with more meaningful and cultural viewpoints; he is offered wider opportunities for expressing both creative abilities and individual differences; and finally the acquirement of better working habits becomes a necessity for measurable success. Dr. Clark concludes that:

"Shortcomings as well as new assets may become apparent as we check further the results of our

experimentation, but in its present embryonic state we are optimistic that our boys and girls find their intellectual porridge neither too hot nor too cold—but just right."

### Varied Experiments in the Arts

PARENTS interested in music have watched with attention the development of Mrs. Coleman's work at Lincoln School of which she says:

"Many years ago in the beginning of my experiments with simple instruments there were none to be had, therefore, I said to myself, the children shall build up their own art, and experience the development of music from the beginning. Something over seven years ago I began a series of experiments in the Lincoln School to see whether it would be practicable for a large group of children in a school situation to make musical instruments, and to see if all the children in a grade could also learn to play these with brief class instruction. The results of these experiments covered a wide range of instruments, dealt with all ages from first grade to junior high school, and have been more than gratifying. This type of work is not a method or a system. It is rather a point of view, or attitude of music education which attaches great importance to the teaching of music but is much more concerned with the growth of children."

Painting, like music, becomes an experience in living, as Mrs. Jennie Fitzhugh Kunst, of Gunston Hall in Washington, D. C., points out. One of the outstanding developments of their year's work was in connection with the study of early American life by the sixth grade. One rainy day when the children were exploring the basement of their newly acquired school building, they went rushing to the principal to inquire if they might have the one-time laundry for a club room. She agreed, and said, "You may do anything you wish with it. You may even decorate the walls, if you work your plans out on paper and submit them." Amid exclamations of appreciation, joy and enthusiasm, they trooped out, only to reappear a few hours later with their plans well laid and ready for action.

Fourteen children worked on the room and nine tribes were depicted, as in several cases two worked on a panel. The remaining five panels were used to feature other activities of the same tribes. One child elected to do pottery and a basket, during the time allotted for this work, and another one after a course of talks on weaving, with emphasis on Indian design, decided to spend her free time weaving, so

(Continued on page 211)



# Progressive Education In the Magazines

AT no time since the education of children began to go out of the home has there been so keen an interest in education in general and in school procedure in particular, as there is today. This interest is reflected not only in the output of educational books, but still more in the current periodicals—from educational journals to the daily newspapers. The emphasis is not accidental; education has not suddenly appeared on the horizon; its evolution moves consistently with changes that have affected all our institutions—industry, the church and the home, as well as the school.

Education seems everybody's concern. Today, the lay person (*lay* in the sense that he is not a teacher or educator by profession) courageously goes into print expressing the pros and cons of the "newer ways" our children get their learning. Articles of this nature, either critical or enthusiastic in acceptance of the "creative expression" and "individual development goal," stimulate the reader to go a step further in order to see how far the contributions in educational journals check up with popular magazines. And finally, after scanning these two types of reading material, the reader turns to the expert, the educator-philosopher, who by means of his training, research and experience, evaluates material, methods, and school procedure in the light of progressive social forces.

## With a Light Touch

THE home table is provided with provocative literature of the first type by *Harper's Magazine*. Its November, 1930, issue presents, "The Despotism of Polly Ross," by Alice Beal Parsons. This article leaves the reader with the impression that the educational procedure in one of the "new schools" definitely abdicates teacher leadership and in consequence whatever child stands out in the class, takes the lead. In this particular story Polly, the heroine, is described as "the despot." "The originators of the new schools saw clearly that the old system of majesterial control turned out, in so far as it was successful, stultified intelligence . . . they saw that a free intellectual environment was desirable even for the young; but they did not see that

the substitution of the tyranny of Polly Ross for the tyranny of the teacher was far from being a step toward freedom."

Another article in the February, 1931, issue, "Children of Freedom," is written by Stella Crossley Ward, who professes to believe in the "new education" but points to inadequacies of methods which lead to individuality run riot. The uses to which the new schools of psychology are put, Freud, Jung, Adler and Watson, come in for a share of critical comment.

But the outsider's approach is not always so critical. An article in the July, 1930, number of *The Theatre Guild Magazine* considers the child "instinctively a creator, and doer." Paul N. Turner who discusses "Art Versus the Three R's," is a lawyer by profession and writes from the point of view of the parent. He compares the conventional schoolroom group who submissively acquire useful information with the group happily at work doing things, acquiring knowledge with skill. "The child is a natural artist because he is born into the center of a drama in which he is the star performer. . . . He develops and learns by means of his own experimentations . . . he requires protection, but very little guidance."

In *The New Era* two outstanding literary men have recently expressed themselves on educational procedure with children. A. A. Milne, in the August, 1930, issue, discusses his relation to Christopher Robin. Happiness of the child is the foremost consideration; "nothing else matters." Individual teaching advocated by the modern school is a requisite, yet even with a group of twenty, Milne does not see its possibility. It is too much of a task on the part of the teacher, and, continues Milne, "I know of one modern school where things seem to be made too easy for the boys. Children need difficult and hard things to do; they need to face and overcome, and in the new education there is that danger of making boys, especially, soft."

Aldous Huxley, in the December issue, proceeds, as it were, with the idea mentioned by Milne, and writes "On Making Things Too Easy." Huxley agrees that children should be happy, but not at the expense of acquisition of knowledge and intel-

lectual efficiency. He goes one step beyond the former contributor and says it "is not enough that children should be happy; it is not even enough that they should grow up into virtuous citizens. Virtue without knowledge and intellectual efficiency is but a poor inadequate possession." These attainments require effort "and effort is painful." "The too-humanitarian advanced educationalist" in the writer's estimation educates for a kind of "slack and flabby happiness"; such children are never aroused to make an effort and always take the line of least resistance.

Many more voices are raised, both in praise and criticism. These somewhat extreme attitudes pro and con on the part of the lay observer would point to confusion created on the one hand by personal feelings and reactions, and on the other hand by the great divergence of purpose on the part of the newer schools themselves.

### From the Inside

THE second type of reading material comes to us direct from the experimenter—the teacher working with the child. *Progressive Education*, now a monthly magazine, provides an abundance of interesting articles from within the workshop of the schoolroom. Katherine Taylor, Head Mistress of the Shady Hill School, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, writes for the February, 1930, number on "More Questions Than Answers." By means of questions she endeavors to formulate educational principles:

"Are we giving children in the elementary schools too rich and various a diet? . . . In our eagerness to give the best of everything are we forgetting the need of poise, continuity, focus, and even austerity, in their lives? . . . Is the day too much broken up into kaleidoscopic fragments?" Answer—Rather than try to cover the ground it is far more advisable to study fewer subjects, more richly and thoroughly, from as many approaches as possible. The writer also advocates the one-person teacher, for a group of young children, who would learn to know them and help them unify their experiences. Miss Taylor does not fail to recognize the rare combination of personality, skills and interests this one-person teacher would need to personify. Where this ideal person is not obtainable, the very close collaboration of specialist and grade head can help greatly in unifying the child's school life.

About the professional teacher's training, Miss Taylor is conscious of the confusion confronting her in these days of constant newer ways—"new

methods, new techniques of teaching the techniques." Unless methods are deeply rooted in a sound point of view of what children seem to need, they may be worthless, or even sometimes harmful. "It is not merely a careful arrangement of his environment and an organization of his activities that a child needs. He needs to have parents and teachers who are themselves searching for real values."

In this connection it is particularly interesting to have W. Carson Ryan, Jr., emphasize a similar point in his discussion of "The Education of the Progressive Teacher," in the May, 1930, issue of *Progressive Education*. He points out that existing teacher training agencies are inadequate in both colleges and normal schools. His highest commendation is for apprenticeship—an "internship" by the young teacher in a progressive school.

And still more contributions come to us, from *Progressive Education*, throwing light on what is happening in the new schools. The January, 1931, number, for instance, is devoted to dramatics; the work of the librarian and the use of the school library is discussed in February, by Kate W. Ward. In the same issue Arthur C. Perry, Jr., answers to the question, "What is a progressive school?" Neither modern building, nor liberal playground space, gymnasium, small classes, assistant research workers, liaison officers will, because of all these facilities, make the progressive institution. All these attributes may be absent, valuable as they are as aids in furthering the work, yet, the really progressive teacher can develop intellectual curiosity, initiative, and esthetic appreciation without them.

Professional school magazines such as *The School Executive Magazine*, *Childhood Education*, *Journal of Education*, *School and Society*, *Journal of National Education Association*, *Pedagogical Seminary*, furnish a wealth of information on methods, change of program, newer ways of teaching subject matter.

Although every age level comes in for discussion, public interest in so-called preschool education is everywhere featured. *American Childhood* for February and December, 1930, contains stimulating articles by Harriet M. Johnson, "Pioneer Babies in the New Education" and "Play Materials for the Preschool Child." What is done in "Two Public School Nurseries" is described in the March, 1930, issue of the same magazine by Rose H. Alschuler.

The secondary school is the center of controversy on matters of progressive education. Dr. Thomas H. Briggs in the Inglis Lecture on Secondary Education at Harvard, on January 9th, accused authorities in charge of not meeting their obligation to the state in the education of youth, through lack of



achievement. He criticized both the subjects offered and the failure to stimulate further interest in continued study after compulsion ceases. A synopsis of this address, including newspaper comments, is given in the March, 1930, *Teacher's College Record*.

## Purposes and Ideals

FINALLY, the mature observations of the educator-philosopher have received widespread attention in *The New Republic* symposium, "The New Education Ten Years After" (June 4, 11, 18, 25, July 2, 9), in which a group of distinguished leaders in education survey the field.

Margaret Naumburg writes on "The Crux of Progressive Education" and points to national trends as the vital factor in educational procedure. "The European educator will find that his problem is to adjust the individual to the values of group life, whereas for the American the problem will be to avoid too great emphasis on group life and develop an individualism that is socially responsive."

Caroline Pratt discusses "Two Basic Principles of Education." She outlines the program followed in her school (City and Country School, New York City) and relates it to its basic principles—first, that "content of program spring from experience," and second, "that the information and the technique result from the play and work."

Boyd H. Bode writes on "Apprenticeship or Free-

dom," Joseph K. Hart on "Judging Our Progressive School," Francis Mitchell Froelicher, "A Program for Progressive Schools"; the concluding article is by John Dewey on "How Much Freedom in the Schools."

These writers are in full accord on the need for reform in matters of the conventional and isolated schoolroom atmosphere, but are emphatic that the reformed curriculum, the new subject matter must be "as well organized as was the old, indeed, better organized in any vital sense of the word organization—but having an intimate and developing relation to the experiences of those in school."

They further agree on the child's need for adult guidance in the form of adult patterns. As Dr. Dewey says, "The child is not something isolated, he does not live inside himself; but in a world of nature and man. His experience is not complete in his impulses and emotion, and until an experience has become relatively mature, the impulses do not even know what they are reaching toward and for, they are blind and inchoate. To fail to insure their guidance and direction is not merely to permit them to operate in a blind and spasmodic fashion, but it promotes the formation of habits of immature, undeveloped and egoistic activity. Guidance and direction mean that the impulse and desires take effect through material that is impersonal and objective."

BERTHE GOODKIND.

# When Parents Want to Know

*The Schools Committee of the Child Study Association grows out of the members' desire to enlarge their own perspective.*

SCHOOLDAYS—as we can see with our own eyes—are absorbing more and more of the child's time and energy and interest. The tendency has frequently been for the home either to welcome this as a relief from responsibility, or to resent it as an assumption of privileges which parents feel belong to the home. As a matter of fact, it should be neither.

If one views education as a process which begins at birth and ends only as life ends, the home has a

very definite part to play in it. The ideal relationship toward which both parents and educators must work then assumes, somewhat paradoxically, that the longer the school day, the more important becomes the parent.

As one attempt to meet this conscious need, the Schools Committee of the Child Study Association came into being, growing out of a subcommittee of a study group in order to meet the need of certain

parents. From their first interest in the school situation as it affected their own children, this group has grown and developed into a standing committee interested in presenting findings which may ultimately help other parents as well.

The twenty parents who make up the committee represent almost as many different types of schools. Each member plans to visit the school which her own children attend and one other. She will do this not once but as many times as will enable her to get a clear picture of what the school is doing.

In order that this visiting may be done with the cooperation of the schools themselves, the Child Study Association presented the plan to the heads of the schools at a meeting in February and enlisted their interest and cooperation. The objective in visiting is not so much to get a report of the school as it is for the parents themselves to grow more intelligent about what to look for in schools, and to become more watchful for ways and means in which to cooperate with the school. The Committee thus assumes that the joint purpose of parent and school is to bring about more adequate adjustment of the child to life as a whole. It is not so much interested in the *how* of the school program, which is part of the technique of teaching, as it is in the *why*.

Thus somehow both the school and home must find a solution to their mutual problem and together provide a community, as ideal as possible, in which the child may grow in what Dr. Kilpatrick calls a "novelly developing world." Somehow they must both agree upon certain things that are essential to be learned, that will not have to be soon unlearned. They must agree upon developing attitudes which will grow as the child grows and they must help the child to make adjustments to the changes that inevitably come. Together they must build up in the child certain securities which will not fail him in his moments of greatest need.

There are many practical and immediate questions which can be faced most constructively only on this basis of cooperation. There is, for instance, the question of homework. Many schools still feel this is a necessary evil, but have little conception of the difficulties it has always presented to the home, particularly to the modern home with its smaller quarters and manifold distractions. Would it not be possible for the school to assume certain phases of "homework," leaving to the home the things which will not only bring closer cooperation but contribute enrichment to the school subjects? Homes very often are capable of enriching school work in a way and to a degree which is frequently unrecognized.

Many misunderstandings in regard to the health of the school child—emotional as well as physical—

can be met by home and school together. It is also altogether possible to take away much of the fear of physical examinations, and to bring better cooperation as regards the prevention and precaution against infections. Some of the other "school problems" in which home cooperation is essential for solution include: the school lunch itself and the lunch period; the elimination of some of those more difficult and subtle problems such as likes and dislikes, and fears; the development of a philosophy of education that maintains that every day should represent a normally happy progress in growth.

Then, too, could not both home and school together work toward a concept of discipline as training for a proper use of freedom; of obedience as a *reforming* not a *conforming* force in this education for freedom, which will help the child to think and act wisely as well as independently? Along with this, cannot human relationships be so conceived that the child is led to find out helpful ways of dealing with his own personal as well as social problems?

Coeducation is another problem for parents and schools to face squarely, together recognizing its difficulties and increasing its assets.

And last, but not least, is the immediately pressing problem of what share the home and what share the school should assume in all the extracurricular activities of the child.

It is on the basis of such questions as these that the members of the Schools Committee work in making their reports on individual visiting. These reports are to be presented and discussed by the Committee as a whole; a summary of all the visiting will then be made in order that it may be discussed with the heads of schools. Out of such a cooperative undertaking it is confidently hoped real understanding will develop.

Perhaps the day is not far distant when in every school there will be a "parent educator," qualified as a member of the staff, but with such additional training as will help her to smooth the rough places over which many children must travel on what should be a pleasant road between home and school.

This would perhaps in part answer the plea which Lawrence Jacks makes in a recent article in *Adult Education*. He says that there should be "a lengthening of line in education backward behind the stage of reading and writing, forward far beyond the stage of 'book say' and 'hearsay.' What we need is the coeducation of the mental and the physical in education, the coeducation of the whole man and the whole woman."

ELISABETH BABCOCK, *Chairman*  
*Schools Committee of the Child Study Association*



# Parents' Questions and Discussions

*Interpretations of the so-called "new" education are so varied that many parents are frankly puzzled. In study groups considering this subject many questions reflect the uncertainty of parents, eager to accept the new but hesitating to relinquish the old and tried.*

*If a child has always gone to a progressive school, will it be difficult to change later to a more formal school, should such a change be necessary?*

There might, of course, be some difficulties in making such a transition, depending somewhat on the grade at which the change is made. In the lower grades there are likely to be wide differences in subject matter covered and skills mastered, especially in the three R's. If the school to which the child is transferred knows the circumstances and is willing to cooperate, these differences can be made up in a comparatively short time by means of some individual drill. It has been the general experience of progressive schools that the children in their groups who learn these skills at seven or eight years cover the ground much more rapidly than than children do at five or six.

Where the change of schools is made at a later age—say at high school entrance—the transition to a formal school has, in many cases, proved to be less difficult than had been anticipated. It is the aim of the progressive school to help the child learn to think through for himself the problems that are presented. If he has learned to do this in his early school years, he should be able to meet successfully the demands of the new situation presented by the different type of school.

*Will the absence of "marks" or other rewards for competition in school work mitigate against ambition?*

Educators who oppose the giving of marks, prizes and other rewards for success at school do so on the theory that children's work, to have real educative value, must be interesting for its own sake. If the content of the work has valid interest, the satisfactions of doing it well are sufficient reward. The offer of an extraneous reward, on the other hand, actually diverts attention from the satisfactions of the work itself. In certain kinds of work the child may compete with his own best, to make it better. But on the whole the spirit of competition does less to spur ambition than does the child's

interest in work which is in itself an invitation and a challenge.

*The impression prevails that the "new" education strives to "sugar-coat" all school tasks, and that the children are required to do only what they enjoy doing. If this is so, how and where will these children learn the discipline of disagreeable tasks, and of sustained effort in the face of difficulties?*

Inevitably, because of individual differences, not all subjects will appeal equally to every child. Nevertheless there is usually, in the progressive school, a well-defined program of subject matter to be covered with some latitude allowed as to the time and place of the required subjects in each child's program. Because all of the subjects are made to dovetail into a related whole, the need for inquiry into certain subjects and mastery over certain skills grows naturally out of work along related lines; and the children realize their own need for study of these subjects. The very experience of success in the studies which they do enjoy makes it easier for these children to attack with determination even those subjects for which they have a disability or distaste.

*Does the "freedom" in the new schools, stressing the individual's right to "self-expression" encourage children to be rude and inconsiderate to one another and to their elders?*

It might be wise, first, to differentiate between what is really "consideration" and what is demanded in the name of "good manners." It is true that a child who is deeply absorbed, or intent on a self-chosen task, is likely to neglect the courtesies of "please" and "thank you." This is not to belittle these useful social courtesies, but rather to plead for suitability of time and place. The consideration that comes from the sharing of tools and material in joint projects in the classroom is very real, whatever it may lack of the outward signs of politeness. In their relations with their teachers there is undoubtedly a freedom that is made possible by the small and informal group organization;

but the teacher bases her claims to "respect" on her skill and wisdom rather than on her vested authority. As regards their contacts with other adults, children can be taught that being true to oneself need not take the form of challenging the rights of other people to their own traditions in matters of courtesy and social behavior.

*When we group school classes according to the I. Q., is there not danger that the "bright" children will grow conceited and the "dull" ones discouraged by this differentiation?*

This kind of grouping calls for skillful and sympathetic handling on the part of both teacher and parent to minimize tendencies of this kind. So far as the "bright" children are concerned, there is perhaps less danger that they will overestimate themselves in an "advanced" group than in the unselected one; for in the latter they must always shine in contrast, while in the former they measure their abilities only against their peers in intellectual stature. Similarly, the slower children are thus relieved of the feelings of inferiority that come of always being among the lowest. Both groups can be helped to understand that the classification is for expediency in working with large groups; and also that pace is not necessarily an index of worth. We will perhaps in time find designations for these divisions which will adequately define their educational significance in terms that leave no room for misinterpretation.

*Lessons in French, music and dancing fill most of the after-school hours of a girl of eleven. Her teacher believes that the child's school work is suffering because of these extra activities, but the mother wants her child to have these "advantages" as an important part of her education.*

The first question to consider here is that of the child's interest. Do these outside activities represent her own desires? In so far as she is expressing her real interest through these activities she will find them recreational and stimulating, and her school work will not be likely to suffer. It is only when demands are imposed which do not represent the child's own desires that the additional lessons become a burden, endangering the wholesome balance between work and play. The long period of concentration demanded by the school day makes it imperative that the after-school hours provide time for relaxation and leisure. An imposed scheduling of this leisure time is, of itself, likely to make for pressure to which an eleven-year-old should not be subjected. Sometimes it is possible, through parent-school cooperation, to

have some of the child's special interests incorporated as a part of the school curriculum. This is done in many of the progressive schools, which offer a choice of the arts and so-called cultural subjects during the school day.

*A junior high school boy is very talented in drawing but has great difficulty with academic work. His drawing teacher urges that he be relieved of required academic schooling as soon as permissible, in order to concentrate on art.*

Two vital considerations argue against such a step. From the vocational point of view, it often happens that an early show of talent is overestimated by enthusiastic teachers or parents, and never materializes as a gift great enough to be a vocational asset. But what is more important is the consideration of the child as a total personality, adapted to the varied demands of modern living. Whether his art is to be vocation or avocation, he still will have need of a wellrounded educational background. He also needs the disciplinary values that come from facing and surmounting difficult tasks rather than evading them. An understanding of his leanings and of his special problems on the part of all his teachers should lead them to be sympathetic and helpful. But not until he is further developed in both his art and his power to make a choice should he be permitted to shut the door of all other educational opportunities.

*A boy of twelve was sent home from school with a note saying that he had been rude to his teacher and must apologize to her before he could come back to her class. The "rudeness" had consisted in correcting a factual error she had made in a history lesson, and insisting on the correction when she did not admit her error. The parents, feeling that the boy had been justified in his stand, do not believe he should be humiliated by having to apologize.*

Without violating the boy's sense of justice his parents can still help him to understand the teacher's point of view. He can be given a sympathetic insight into her problems and difficulties in dealing with a large group and conforming also to the school's demands and standards. The teacher might be brought to invite this boy to a friendly talk about the matter. But if she fully believes that the discipline of the class depends upon the "apology" she has demanded, the parents can best help the situation by paving the way for an apology—an apology, not for offering the correction, but for the spirit in which he had insisted upon it beyond the point of courtesy.



# Book Reviews

## *Contrasted Settings*

*School Acres.* By Rossa B. Cooley, with crayons from life by Winold Reiss. Yale University Press. 166 pages. 1930.

Through the pages of *School Acres* we catch glimpses of the white oyster-shell roads which, like shining threads, knit the plantation life of St. Helena Island into a community, and thus symbolize the genius of Penn School. Down those roads a pageant of civilization unrolls before us as on a scroll. In such a setting, this first Southern Negro school was opened in the early sixties; and in the years that followed, under the founders of the school, the demonstration was carried through—that these field hands, marooned in ignorance under slavery, would respond to teaching. Under Rossa B. Cooley and Grace Bigelow House, this belated liberty and this early learning have been linked with life. St. Helena has become a laboratory where for a quarter of a century has been carried out our most arresting experiment in community education. And Miss Cooley has blended with her narrative a record of practical experience that will be of help to race leaders and rural educators everywhere. Moreover she offers a new approach to the urban teacher or civic leader who would re-align our work for children to the far more rapid changes of our industrial centers, or who would relate education to the growing needs of adults who must keep abreast of the changes which sweep in and through our modern civilization.

From this angle, Penn School is an experiment in releasing initiatives and fostering cooperative self-reliance in an epoch of change. That the stage in which the work at Penn is set is small, the tempo of life comparatively slow, is an advantage to those who would learn from it.

Change has not come as a gesture of paternalism but as an overture of leadership to release nascent forces for self-development and group initiative. Its very genius has been not to lay things on but to stir things up and build from the bottom democratically.

How they have done this is illuminated especially in the chapter of *School Acres* on the "Grown Folks Go to School." Back in the sixties men and women of all ages took their places on the rude benches which were the first steps toward book learning. Today, through the mothers' clubs, the midwives' or-

ganization, the cooperatives, the farmers' fair, and at a hundred other points of contact, the island folks are drawn in not only as parents but as participants in the educational and community work that is transforming this rural life. The book is an exhibit of the interplay we may expect among the generations, once men, women and children catch the vision of a common goal.

PAUL U. KELLOGG.

*The Teacher in the New School.* By Martha Peck Porter. World Book Co. 312 pages. 1930.

Here is a book which answers for parents as well as teachers many of the questions uppermost in the minds of everyone who faces the problem of putting the newer educational theory into practice. Innumerable books have been published recently on the theory of progressive education and an equal number dealing with descriptions of children's work. But there is a growing demand for the type of book which harmonizes theory and practice; of these *The Teacher in the New School* is an outstanding example.

This accurate account of how a teacher and her pupils play and work together was written to answer the questions of those who doubt the value of the new education, and also to give practical aid to teachers in public and private schools who wish to pursue the progressive path. Miss Porter succeeds admirably in describing some of the techniques underlying procedures based on children's interests, their individual differences, their natural ways of learning through activity and their relation to society. Her objectives as she guides the children's work show an unusually penetrating grasp of essentials. The book is written with a degree of sanity, clearness, and above all modesty, which serve to make its contribution unique. From her wealth of experience in many different schools including the Lincoln School, New York, Miss Porter concludes that the new method of teaching is applicable to work with pupils of any age, and also that the principles of progressive education can be carried over into the public school system.

EDITH B. WERTZ.

# Anna Garlin Spencer

*Her fellow workers in the Child Study Association of America—the Board of Directors, the Staff, and the Advisory Board on which she was of unfailing service—unite in paying tribute to Anna Garlin Spencer.*

ANNA GARLIN SPENCER was born in Attleboro, Mass., in 1851. The first record in her long history of activities was nine years on the Providence Journal, ending in 1878 when she married Rev. William H. Spencer, with whom she worked until the time of his death. In 1891 she was ordained as a Unitarian minister in Providence. She was an associate leader in the New York Society for Ethical Culture from 1903 to 1909. Her many connections during the last thirty years of her life included: associate leader and staff lecturer, New York School of Philanthropy; special lecturer, University of Wisconsin; professor of Sociology and Ethics, Theological School in Meadville, Pa.; lecturer at the University of Chicago; director, Division of Family Relations, American Social Hygiene Association; special lecturer in Social Science, Teachers College, Columbia University. She was active in these last two positions at the time of her death.

## A Tribute

ON the 11th of February Anna Garlin Spencer died just before the end of her eightieth year. Few women in any generation have lived as full a life as she; she left as she would have wished, working to the very end. Those who have known her during the later years were constantly amazed by the freshness of her spirit and her untiring enthusiasm for the many causes dear to her heart. Again and again when her slight person appeared upon a public platform she seemed, to those who saw her for the first time, to invite special consideration for her years, for her frail figure—only to arouse and astonish with her stirring voice and challenging thoughts.

Mrs. Spencer combined in an unusual degree the eagerness of youth for untried possibilities with the deep wisdom of many rich years for seeing around and through a problem. Because of the first she was an unfailing source of inspiration to all who were striving to make this a better world; and because of the second, a most helpful counsellor wherever men and women met together to deal with important problems. Remarkable, too, was the vast range of interests that she was able to touch and help. Her open mind brought her into understanding sympathy

with many movements, but as she threw herself whole-heartedly into everything she undertook, her insight was at the service of multitudes who were themselves specialized and restricted in their outlooks, but whom she influenced to richer living.

Her breadth of vision animated a recent letter regarding a lecture she asked me to give on February 18 to her students at Teachers College. Writing, as she said, "in comradeship" to one who had first come into contact with her as a student in 1904, she outlined a group of lectures typical of her vigorous grasp of both the new and the old:

"I am changing a little the sequence of my outline so as to give the class the benefit of a topic that I have named 'Social Aspects of Parent Education.' I begin with the talk on 'Eugenics, Euthenics, Eudemics.' I follow with 'The Basic Institutions of Society'; next I give a brief historic review of the family in ancient and modern times; and finally discuss 'New Responsibilities of Women in Marriage and Family Life.' If you take the larger phases of parent education then, on my return, I can take up special questions of so-called illegitimate children, maternity benefits, family insurance, etc."

Mrs. Spencer worked with men as well as women, with all classes of people, on the basis of a common humanity, in utter devotion and self-forgetfulness. Her place was among the *first*. On the occasion of the general meeting of the *first* International Congress on Venereal Disease Control, in 1920, she fired a vast audience to instant and spontaneous acknowledgment of her stirring vision of opportunity and responsibility. At the *first* National Conference on Parent Education in 1925, she brought together, as the last speaker on the last day, all the practical and spiritual significance of the meeting in a most impressive way. On many occasions she was an active and influential participant in *first* conferences. On her seventy-fifth birthday representatives of twenty-five important national and international movements paid tribute to her leadership and assistance in carrying forward their respective tasks. She worked constantly for the future, but with a sage grasp of the present; and her influence will reach long into the future, past the memories of all of us who knew her and loved her and admired her.

SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG.



# News and Notes

**A**N Exhibit is announced by the Committee on Children's Art of the Child Study Association, at Headquarters, opening on March 17.

On that afternoon at 3:30 there will be a meeting at which Dr. William H. Kilpatrick and Mr. Peppino Mangravite will be the speakers, and Mrs. C. Van Rensselaer Halsey, the Chairman, will preside.

That there is a general interest in art just now is obvious without counting the number of art galleries or art publications. Esthetic values are in demand high and low, and from the Empire State Building to Woolworth's basement, they are in the public eye. Interest in art is pursued even in the up-bringing of children although very little is known as yet about it in this connection. One manufacturer, venturing into this field, tells parents that because the earliest esthetic impressions are so important baby's eyes should rest first on nothing but the beauty of his silks. In a new hospital a nursery for newborn babies has been decorated with mural paintings which, the hospital management explains, has an important influence on the infants. (One wonders *how*, since the newborn cannot see.) Besides these indications, any number of serious and interesting projects are being carried on, such as, The Chicago Art Institute's print collection for public schools, the new art program for the New York City schools, and the children's museum at University Settlement in New York City.

Encouraged by the interest that was shown in its Exhibit of last year, the Committee on Children's Art has continued its study. It has assembled another group of pictures, toys, textiles, furniture and other elements of a child's surroundings that have esthetic as well as practical possibilities. Three rooms suitable for different ages will be shown; one for a two-year-old assembled by the Committee; another for an eight-year-old girl done by Macy's, and an older boy's room done by The Children's Center.

Another feature of this year's Exhibit will be the results of a design contest for a child's bowl, plate, pitcher and mug which the Committee is sponsoring because there is such poor material in the market.

## Horace Mann Bulletin

What children do and see in their leisure, is one of the problems about which parents and teachers most frequently voice mutual concern. The Parents Association of the Horace Mann Schools takes the initiative in doing something about it in a practical way. The Bulletin, published by the Association, aims to provide a fortnightly index of the best things available in New York for young people. Edited by a group of parents it presents only things that can be highly recommended, and lists music, art exhibits, theaters, motion pictures and books for children at different age levels. It is almost unique in setting up community standards which are equally acceptable to the school, the parents and the children themselves. In order to give as complete as possible a guide to leisure time opportunities, the Bulletin also notes meetings of interest to parents themselves outside as well as within the school. Individual parents or school groups who are interested in subscribing may communicate with the Editors—Mrs. Henry H. Beers, Mrs. John W. Remer and Mrs. Robert E. Simon at Room 309-A, Horace Mann School, Broadway and 120th Street, New York City. But its significance is more than local, in that it suggests to parent groups in other centers a real community service for which parents are peculiarly fitted.

## Radio Talks at 3:00 P.M.

Questions on child training will be answered by staff members of the Child Study Association over the radio every Friday afternoon at 3:00. Questions may be sent to WEAJ, 711 Fifth Avenue, New York City, or the Association's Headquarters, 221 West 57th Street.

## What Is News?

CHILD STUDY welcomes news of everything of interest to parents. Parent education, parent-school co-operation, experiments in education, new findings in child psychology—all these and many other related activities are increasingly important to our readers. Wherever work is going forward that touches on child training there are potential contributors to the News and Notes columns, who are urged to keep us informed.

# Books for Children

## *Adventures in History*

*Rustam.* By Alan Lake Chidsey. Minton, Balch & Co., New York. 270 pages. 1930.

*Rustam* is a compelling recital of the heroic deeds of the hero of the Persian epic. Of such gigantic stature that horses failed beneath his weight, and of such marvelous skill of brain and hand, that the very mention of his name brought terror to his enemies—of such stuff was this *Rustam* made. Helped into the world by the magic bird Simurgh, he bore from the start the marks of god-like greatness. Both wise and impetuous, powerful and gentle when need arose, it was inevitable that he should lead Persia into greatness. But the path he trod was lined with the dead bodies of his foes, and the land flowed for years with their blood. His triumphant progress was marked too, by personal tragedy, for thinking to slay his enemy, he killed the son he had never seen. Then followed more wars of vengeance, friendships and betrayals, and battles upon battles, *Rustam* dominating the fortunes of his country with more than human power and understanding, until at the end he who had never tasted defeat in war perished from a poisoned dart set like a snare on the road he traveled on his last mission to prove his power.

This is the story told with no little power and vividness. And there is more too, than mere story, for the characters speak and act with more than a surface authenticity. The civilization of ancient Persia really lives for us as we read. Because the tale is so remote in time, and the ideals of the civilization it depicts so alien to that for which we are now striving, we might wish that the style were at times a little less realistic, a little more in the grand manner of the epic, preserving an inner reality without the gruesome details of realism.

But the book is well worth reading for its virility, for its story and for the instructive and beautiful pictures by Lois Lenski who has made so careful a study of medieval Persian art.

*The White Captain.* By Georgia Fraser. Little, Brown & Co., Boston. 319 pages. 1930.

In a world in which our emotional needs create on the one hand superpatriotism, and on the other a blatant cynicism, it is refreshing to discover a book that touches upon the past history of our country

with a simple dispassionateness. There is cause for special rejoicing when that book is for children.

*The White Captain* is both an illuminating and delightful volume, dealing with life in Jamestown during the days of Captain John Smith. Written as a novel with sufficient plot interest to satisfy the most captious, it yet delineates the life of those early American days, both from the Indian and English point of view, with a rare clarity and objectivity. No preconceived theories of the white man's inalienable right to wrest the virgin land from the Indians is offered the receptive-minded child. Instead he is shown the problem as it presented itself to John Smith himself. With the hero of the story he must weigh the arguments: on the one hand, new territory and glory for the mother country; on the other, ultimate confiscation of land from those who had enjoyed it for endless years.

His sympathies go out to the lone captain whose far-seeing vision keeps him often from the simpler pleasures of simpler men, and to the Indian maid Motoka, or Pokahontas, whose love for the White Captain was destined to so much frustration, and to John Rolfe, who though he married Matoka was never able to capture her heart. Miss Fraser has written a glamorous story around her principal characters, and yet it is so simply and convincingly done, that not even the most skeptical will say such people could not really have lived.

SARA BLOCH.

## New List of Children's Reading

A LIST of books for children's leisure time reading is in process of preparation by the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association. The list will be planned to serve the interests of children from nine to fourteen years of age, and to include books of Romance and Adventure, Biography, Science and Invention, Folk and Fairy Tales, Short Stories, Bible Stories and Poetry. This general selection will supplement the more specialized lists already prepared by the Committee: Books for Nature Study, Books of Travel for Young People, and Books About New York City. It is planned for publication in April.



## This Is the Way They Work

(Continued from page 200)

with help she set up a loom and did a very lovely table scarf in Navaho design.

When finished, the walls presented a veritable panorama of Indian life: Aztecs in formal gardens, Hopis with houses, and pottery drying in the sun, Ojibways in gliding canoes, Shoshonis at trading posts, Eskimos in the frozen north, Zunis in a busy village scene, the marriage of Pocahontas for Virginia Indians, the Iroquois with war-like mein, and Navahos peacefully weaving rugs and making jewelry, the whole divided and bound together with a band of red paint, decorated with Indian writing and designs in black.

The development of these children through concentration, daily cooperation and social contacts, the patience, perseverance and initiative acquired, and the feeling of satisfaction in the final accomplishment, to say nothing of the ability gained in reading, the increase in vocabulary, the correlation of history and geography, are so comprehensive that they need no elucidation.

It is so often said that, while such experimental ventures could be developed in a small school like that described, they are not possible in a large public school setting. The Winnetka, Illinois, and the Bronxville, New York, Public Schools are two outstanding examples of how progressive principles are actually being utilized on a large scale. Many other cities have also been definitely influenced. One prominent educator, after a visit to the schools in San Antonio, Texas, spoke in enthusiastic terms of the way in which this whole school system has been enriched by this vital "leading on" idea of education.

A new method of evaluating school procedures has been given an experimental trial at Bronxville as described by Mr. Willard Beatty.

The suggestion of several leading educators that the development of a library of talking pictures of a variety of educational procedures might help to solve the problem of demonstration teaching, led to a request that the Bronxville Schools cooperate in the production of two experimental films of classroom practice. This request was granted.

Two classrooms in the Bronxville elementary school were chosen, one a first grade, completing its first semester of work, the other a sixth grade preparing for junior high school. A day or two before the photographs were taken, the children were told of the plan, and were asked to take the whole procedure as a matter of course. No attempt

was made to rehearse them. The teachers also entered into the arrangement with the understanding that incidents from a typical day were to be photographed, and that no special plans were to be made. The films were taken, were edited and were shown for the first time at the Atlantic City meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. This is what can be reported as to the value of the experiment.

"First, the lack of self-consciousness on the part of our children both surprised and pleased us. While not so unexpected in the first grade, the sixth grade proved more oblivious of their break into 'talkies' than we had dreamed possible. Second, we were pleased to discover how intelligently busy with their own affairs the children turned out to be. We feel that these films are honest evidence of the seriousness of purpose of the children in a progressive school, where most of the accepted restraints of the older tradition have been abandoned. Third, we caught ourselves saying and doing things in response to the stimuli of the moment we weren't so sure we liked, and which we shall probably modify in the near future. We saw our posture seatings not entirely fulfilling their purpose, and set to work to find out why so as to correct the difficulties. Fourth, we found the films stimulating to even further analysis of classroom procedure. Lastly, we do hazard the guess that the talking picture has brought the dawn of a new day in the spread of clean-cut knowledge of newer educational methods."

Perhaps for parents the outstanding things about these Bronxville pictures are that they give the teachers a chance to "see themselves as others (particularly parents) see them," and that they also help parents to get a glimpse of the teacher's load.

### Progress in a Traditional Setting

How a school may focus the interest of an entire community is vividly told in Miss Elsie Ripley Clapp's story of the Ballard Memorial School in Jefferson County, Kentucky. Here in a public rural county school eight miles from Louisville, two hundred and eight children—more than two-thirds of whom come from country farms and less than one-third from homes of opportunity—have been given the results of the best educational thought of today. In many ways this experiment typifies with particular clarity the significant spirit of the new schools.

The attempt is made to use the school and its resources to meet the genuine needs of the children and their families. In the health work at the school,

the physicians' examinations and dental care, the nourishing lunches, the cots for rest, the corrective exercises, the games, the clothing relief, the care for sickness and trouble, the county authorities, the parents and the teachers have worked together. The school is trusted and turned to for help by all its families, and is literally a vital and necessary part of its community.

Kentucky is rich in educational opportunity. It is still young in years and still largely agricultural. Many of the children at the school live under conditions not very different from those of their pioneer ancestors. Plowing, sowing and reaping, the growth of corn, and tobacco, the raising of horses, sheep, pigs and chickens, and hunting and fishing, are still the occupation of many of the country people. The processes of soap-making, and of dyeing from leaves, vegetables, roots and berries are still carried on in many homes. Spinning and weaving are within the memory of the children's parents and a skill known to some of their grandmothers.

The nearness of the river and the passing of the river packets and steamboats, the loading and unloading of food and fuel and building supplies, the accessibility in Louisville of manufacturing plants and of stores, add to the richness of the environment educationally.

Moreover, Kentucky's interesting past is still a matter of living interest in her present. The children still play and search in the caves inhabited by the earliest Kentuckians who preceded the Indian hunting lives. Relics are still found, as are countless Indian arrowheads, at every plowing. The stone bed of the river still holds fossils of ancient sea life, the clay of the creeks yields its treasures to child searchers.

The school started its program by a study of different phases of Kentucky history—the life of the early cave dwellers and Indians; the pioneers and the days of log cabins and log forts; the growth of settlements and towns and cities; the development of the old Buffalo Trace and Indian Warrior's Path into the Wilderness Road, and later into the highways and railroads of the state; the growth of the river traffic from the days of dugout and canoe, of flatboats, keelboats and barges, to the time of river packets and steamboats still plying up and down the Ohio within sight of the school; Kentucky's special function in the opening up of the West; her relation with the English, French and Spanish in this country; her later role in the last hundred years.

All of the children adjusted rapidly to the changes to active learning and have been radiantly happy in it. The expanding interests of the school commu-



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Through constant acquaintance with the people, the fathers and mothers, and families, and neighbors, with the homes and the other schools, with the interests of the city and state and northern newcomers on the staff at the school have learned much and themselves greatly benefitted by these many and varied contacts. It is a school that actually is a social institution, where knowledge is put to the searching test of illuminating daily living. It hopes that its work may be of benefit first to its own people, and in a small way to the great and moving work of rural education throughout the country.

### The Challenge of Success

As in the Kentucky countryside, so also everywhere progress in education can be realized only through the close cooperation of the parents. There are many parents who do believe in the philosophy of education, for which the progressive school stands, that education is a happy gradual growth in daily living, and not a perfunctory and passive absorption of bits of knowledge.

It is a good sign when parents direct questions at the new schools—among others as to delaying the three R's; as to "sugar coating" essential tasks; as to the alleged difficulty of applying progressive methods in a large setting like the public school.

The school feels that it can justly reply to the parents that delaying the three R's is in part an answer to the child's own challenge. So it is that this school first lets the child investigate his own world and gives him fascinating glimpses of what lies beyond, and then shows him that he cannot travel far without these useful tools. The school also shows the parent that the uninteresting task, the hard bench and unattractive school surroundings are not nearly so conducive to developing initiative and discovering latent abilities as is the attractive laboratory school. Finally it has been demonstrated that what goes on in a small laboratory school can be adapted to public school education.

These are only a few of the problems parents and schools of today are facing together. To sum up, it might be said that any real necessity which brings progress, no matter in what field, brings also new problems, and each new problem challenges its own solution. In the school world the parent and the school must tackle and solve its new problems together. For parents have a vital part in the success of all these school ventures.... Each must help the other in order that both may help the child.

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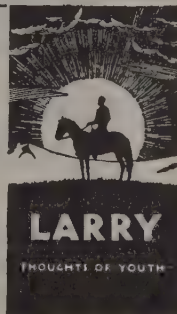
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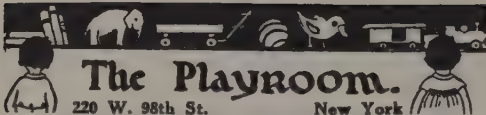
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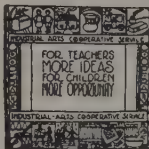
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